



LET'S
MAKE
MEDICAID
EVEN
BETTER!

Notes from ACO Medicaid Community Meeting

Tuesday, July 29, 6pm

Quapaw Quarter United Methodist Church, Little Rock

Medicaid community members attending: Ms. Crystal and her daughter, Ms. Joyce, Ms. Jacqueline, Mr. Daniel, Ms. Crystal and Mr. Frederick and their three children, Ms. Valencia White, Ms. Quenitra, plus ACO staff Lorilee, Nick, Donnie, and Demetrius

Medicaid Issues we would like to see addressed:

- **TRANSPORTATION:**
 - Some of us struggle with Medicaid transport because they are picking multiple people, and he will be late to his appointments, or is unable to attend urgent Dr. appointments or make appointments that could get scheduled in less than 48 hours notice
 - A dedicated transportation service, that could pick up single individuals, according to their individual scheduling needs, with same-day notice, would be extremely helpful to getting clients to the care they need in a more reliable manner. This could be paid for out of budget surplus
- **SERVICES**
 - One family praised the critical services that Medicaid provided when her youngest son was critically ill and at Children's Hospital earlier this year. Life-saving therapies were fully covered by Medicaid, and now her son is thriving
 - In contrast, another member has stage 4 cancer, and while his dr recommends bi-weekly chemo treatments, Medicaid is only covering once a month, so he is not able to obtain the life-saving care that he needs to treat his cancer
- **MEDICAL EQUIPMENT:**
 - One member needed to order diabetic shoes, but had to take care of an out-of-pocket \$75 expense before she was able to get the shoes she needed to protect her feet
- **DENTAL**
 - Some of us are single working parents, trying to provide children the vision, dental, and healthcare coverage that they need. One member's child needs braces, but the insurance doesn't cover the entire cost. Orthodontia costs thousands of dollars, so out-of-pocket costs can make braces unattainable for many families
- **WEIGHT LOSS & FITNESS**

- A Pine Bluff member suggested Medicaid cover a \$5/month fitness plan/gym membership for those who are struggling with obesity. She sees so many children in her Delta community who are plus size, and that's going to lead to major health issues down the road. Stroke risks are high, and many children are at risk of diabetes.
- **CHILD SUPPORT and DOCUMENTATION**
 - We need to raise the issue of DHS requirements of single parents providing documentation about child support, and enforcing child support payments to remain eligible, but this is a struggle when the dad moves or won't cooperate.

FAIRNESS: One member strongly stated that it's not fair that different people are receiving services easily, and others aren't able to receive the treatments they desperately need, even to save their life. That's cruel. **What are we going to do about all this?**

Proposed plan:

- Use carrot and stick method to persistently push for needed changes.
 - 1) Affirm and celebrate the important services that DHS is already providing; share positive stories; lift up the critical contributions Medicaid makes to keep one million Arkansans healthier.
 - 2) Persistently raise these demands for better coverage with DHS over the long-term. We know they know about these problems – we have to be the squeaky wheel that doesn't go away or quiet down until the problems are fixed. We have two buckets of concerns:
 - Barriers to enrolling or renewing
 - Need for better or more services
- **July 27:** hold celebratory action at DHS to spotlight how important Medicaid is to us
 - Deliver cupcakes to DHS workers at MLK office, deliver card of positive stories
 - talk to media about the importance of Medicaid to 1 million Arkansans, need to make sure no eligible person experiences dropped coverage
- **August 16:** invite Medical Services administrator to August 16 meeting to discuss how we can move forward on some services issues that many of us experience?
- **September:** follow-up with Ms. Ruthie Brown, assistant director for DHS County Operations, on our asks from our June meeting on barriers to enrollment, renewal, and communication